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1922

Nature's Meditations



A BOOK OF VERSES
BY
JOHN DAVID MORRIS

PS 3525
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1922

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By
JOHN DAVID MORRIS



NOV 10 1922

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*This little book of verses is most affectionately dedicated
to*

My Little Granddaughter

VIVIAN ANNETTIA PARROTT

*Hoping that from it she may gain some inspiration towards
the accomplishment of nobler and better things.*

JOHN D. MORRIS, Author

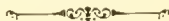
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AUTUMN TIME

The leaves of the forest have turned yellow as gold,
The wind that was balmy is now chilly and cold;
The ripened grain has been gleaned, and everywhere we find
Things that remind us of the coming autumn time!

The days have grown shorter, and the nights seem long,
And we listen in vain for the Nightingale's song;
As the cause for these changes come suddenly to mind,
We realize it is the dawn of another autumn time.

Jack-frost has nipped the buds and pierced the chestnut bur,
The hickory and the walnut have all been made to stir—
From their resting place, too high for boys to climb,
Back to their mother-earth, during the chill autumn time.

The green vesture at last seems to have disrobed herself,
And the hills and vales, their supply of grain and wealth;
All nature seems to be flowing with milk and wine—
In this our glorious golden autumn time.

There comes a season of the year we all look forward to,
When we lay aside dull care, and with nothing else to do—
But to sharpen up our appetites and make ready to dine,
When we make our annual visit, in the good old autumn time.

It behooves us to live, like brave and valiant men,
If we ever hope to reach our three-score years and ten;
And adhere to those principles, like an ivy-clinging vine,
To enjoy perfect happiness, in life's Autumn Time

CONTENT

If we could but awake from a pleasant peaceful dream,
And find abode in a land that would always seem
A paradise, where happy moments are ever spent,
And there rest from our labors and be content.

The gentle stream, on its endless course to pursue,
On its bosom things that are old, but once were new;
Though restless and surging, as on its mission sent,
Seeking to dislodge its burdens, and be content.

The clouds that glide by, on their solemn march o'er head,
And the wind stirs the leaves, that lay silent and dead;
The muttering thunder peals forth, as if to give vent
To a longing desire, to be silent and content.

The waves roll high and burst upon the shore,
Unmindful of death, which it holds in store—
For those who toil, to save those who are bent—
Upon seeking pleasure, that doesn't bring content.

Mankind who has from earliest ages sought
To find perfect satisfaction, but who has been taught
To listen to his conscience, for to him it is meant—
Thou must become reconciled, if thou would'st be content.

THE COLORED Y. M. C. A.

Dedicated to the Colored Y. M. C. A. of Indianapolis, Ind.

There is an institution of great and growing renown,
Where the best young men of this town are constantly to be found;
Now when asked to join, do not wait nor say nay,
But send your application at once to the Colored Y. M. C. A.

This organization produces better fathers, husbands, and sons,
Many mothers are praying that their wayward boys may be won—
From their evil ways, and if possible redeemed this very day,
For this is the supreme mission of the Colored Y. M. C. A.

This association invites you, from the fields of ruin and sin,
And will you help to success, and your battles to win;
For the pleasant environments found there in every way,
Will make you feel right at home, at the Colored Y. M. C. A.

The Choir, Band, and Orchestra have brought both credit and fame—
To this noble institution, to perpetuate and honor its name;
For it stands as a beacon light, to guide men lest they stray,
This noble band of young men we call the Colored Y. M. C. A.

The Sunday monster meetings, with their speakers brave and strong,
Seeking to show men the path of right from the downward path of wrong;
And with our united effort we sincerely hope and pray
That you will finally join our forces, at the Colored Y. M. C. A.

Let us draw back the curtain and look upon the past,
And there behold the work that fourteen years has cast,
Its imprint on the minds of men, in an indestructible way,
Molding and fashioning sentiment, by the Colored Y. M. C. A.

The hoary hand of old age may capture us at last.
But our minds will always stray, to pleasant scenes of the past;
With success crowning our latter days, we can but truly say,—
That it is due to the healthy influence gained, at the Colored Y. M. C. A.

THE CHURCH

The church of God, sanctified and blest,
Where our weary souls find peace and rest;
With humblesness of heart, we ever feel—
Thy divine blessings, as we bow and kneel.

The church of God, where we may ever find—
That solace for heart, body and mind;
That peace which the world can never give—
To one who has faith, to look and live.

DEATH

Death, the final end of all mankind,
Its presence saddens the heart and mind;
It is no respecter of the rich nor poor.
But silently knocks at every man's door.

Death has no terror, nor dreaded fear—
To those whose mind and conscience is clear;
In sweet repose, as we drift away—
To that great beyond, where night is day.

ETERNITY

Life with its frailties, its miseries and woes,
The things that the flesh is heir to, and sin does always sow;
And yet there is a hope supreme, that comes to you and me,
That we will find a balm for all, in that far off eternity.

One day brings its shadows, that fall around us so,
The next sends us chilly winds, with its freezing ice and snow;
Yet in the midst of all this gloom, we certainly feel that we—
Will find some warmth and sunshine in that vast eternity.

Why does the friendship of to-day become the hatred of to-morrow?
And the fickleness of mankind plunge this world in gloom and sorrow?
And we long for a place, that from infidelity we can be free.
With abiding faith we hope to find it, in that vast eternity.

Where is that land from whose bourne no traveler has come?
Yet we pursue our journey, tho' weary, faint and dumb;
Hoping that in the end, if we but faithful be,
Will enter a haven of rest, in that blessed eternity.

When life's sun is setting, and our cares like leaves do fall,
And we close the book wherein recorded, our deeds both great and small;
As we close our eyes in slumber, and in a vision plainly see—
A place of eternal happiness in that far off Eternity.

EASTER DAY

No sound disturbed the stillness, on that blessed Easter Day,
When Angelic force was needed, to roll the stone away;
And with Majestic calmness, He from the tomb arose,
And walked with his disciples, their secret thoughts disclose.

Neatness, not disorder characterized our risen Lord,
And the women who stood weeping, were all of one accord;
That he whom they sought, had been early stolen away,
But he had only risen, so that men might bless this day.

Herald the glad tidings, the whole world around,
Let the echoes resound, wherever man is found;
That death has been robbed of its venomous sting—
By Christ the Lord our risen Savior and King.

THE FOUR SEASONS OF LIFE

The babe as he sleeps in his cradle bed,
His soft curly locks falling round his head;
He knows not of this world's grief and strife,
For he is enjoying the Springtime of life.

The young man ambitious, hopeful and brave,
Seeking each opportunity and advantage to save;
He knows what he does must be done well,
The Summer of life only endures for a spell.

The married man hurries home at eventide
To gather his children around at his side;
He is content with his family and wife,
For he's now happy, in the Autumn of life.

The old man sits and wonders why
He's been left all alone, in the world to die,
For he knows that his time is ebbing fast,
And the Winter of his life is almost past.

FIFTY YEARS OF SERVICE

(Dedicated to the Memory of My Friend, Chas. H. Scott.)

Fifty years of service is not the common lot of man.
Fifty years is a record that will forever stand;
Fifty years of duty, with a cheerful willing mind,
Fifty years of faithfulness will be very hard to find.

After fifty years of railing on the roads throughout the land,
He has finally been retired by death's silent stern command;
In silence he has passed from labor to reward,
To report to his Maker, without a demark of discord.

FOND MEMORIES

Let's draw aside the curtain, and peep into the past,
And silently recall to mind, things that linger fast;
That fill our heart with ecstasy, that through this life will be
A source of comfort and of joy, and those Fond Memories.

Childhood days with fleeting, idle moments spent,
With no cares for the morrow, save deeds that were only meant,—
To satisfy the longings of a childish heart to peace,
And after years recall to us the joy of Fond Memories.

Oh, to recall those youthful days, with its lack of want and care,
And live again those happy hours, and ever constant wear—
A smile of contentment on our face, that even the stately trees,
Share with us in the remembrance of those Fond Memories.

The cool, soft, rippling riverlets, that trickle down the hill,
The calmness and the solitude that surround the old wind mill;
The chirping of the birds, and the busy humming of the bees,
Fill our souls as nothing else, save those Fond Memories.

The sturdy oak with its cool, and all enchanting shade,
As if its only duty was to shelter youth and maid;
And give protection from the storms, that come from o'er the sea.
Now freshen up our weary mind, with those Fond Memories.

The many shady nooks, with their soft seclusive charms,
And the meadows red with clover, that lay just beyond the barn;
The cattle in the low land, and the sheep grazing carelessly,
Recall again to us the joy of those Fond Memories.

The foliage has changed its garment, and bedecked itself in gold,
The grass has lost its greenness, at the approach of winter's cold;
The crops have all been gathered, and the farm boy shouts for glee,
And we hear the echoes ringing, as they recall Fond Memories.

Winter has cast its snowy mantle over hill and dale,
And the rustling of the winds sends forth a dreary, mournful wail;
A sadness steals into our hearts, from which we would be free,
Yet we find abiding comfort, in those last Fond Memories.

We silently close the curtain, as the night of death draws near,
And fold our arms serenely, without a sigh or tear;
In humble supplication upon our bended knees,
We unto Him give the glory for those Fond Memories.

GRIEF

There is no word that pen can describe or write,
Nor artistic hand portray, with colors bright;
That will give solace to the heart that is bereaved,
When plunged in despair of sadness and grief.

Why is my heart cast down with care?
The sunlight grows dim, and the shadows stare—
And mock me 'till I nearly fall beneath—
The weight of sorrow, brought by grief.

The world is not the same to me, as of yesterday,
Spring comes, the flowers bloom, in the same old way;
But with all nature's brightness, there comes no relief
To ease my aching heart, burdened by grief.

What is in that word that causes the head to bow?
The hope of happiness is gone, despair lingers now;
My strength is weak, my faith is strong, it can't be my unbelief
That has left me sad and lonely, unconsolated by grief.

GRATITUDE

I am grateful for a life to live,
And with that life some comfort give—
To those who need a word to cheer—
To banish every doubt and fear.

I am grateful for the friends so true,
And for the many things they do—
To spread sunshine along my way,
That brightens every hour and day.

I am grateful for the flowers that bloom,
And the cheer they bring to every room;
Where sickness and sorrow has found its way,
And gloom and sadness has come to stay.

I am grateful for the birds that sing,
And the silvery notes that so clearly ring—
Out upon the air, so pure and sweet,
At the rising sun, they fly to greet.

I am grateful for all things here below,
For the balmy winds, and the ice and snow;
Grateful for courage and strength to do—
The things that are right, and just and true.

GOOD-BYE

To all there comes a regretful time,
When it seems impossible, words to find—
That will explain to us clearly, the reason why—
It is always so hard to say good-bye.

The youth as he leaves his fond mother's side,
To seek his fortune, whate'er betide;
She gives him her blessing, with a heavy sigh,
As she fondly says, "My dear boy, good-bye."

The husband hurries out, in the early morn,
To work and toil until tired and forlorn,
For a brave little wife who does always try
To encourage him ever, with a fond good-bye.

When friends have gone, who were good and true,
And we feel their absence, as we are sure to do;
Then why do the tears come, and we are forced to cry
For those who left us, without saying good-bye?

When griefs fills the heart and sadness clouds the day,
And we gather 'round, and with faith try to say—
Thy will be done, for man to live must die;
And yet it is so hard to say forever, GOOD-BYE.

THE HAND OF FATE
(Poetical Prose)

Alone I sit and ponder,
As my weary thoughts do wonder—
To the rugged path I've journeyed—
O'er life's uncertain way:

At times my feet would falter,
My heart though sad would alter—
My firm determination—
To pursue my journey on.

For years I've tried to shoulder—
The weight, and still grow bolder—
In my desire to master—
The besetments that would come.

Why do the shadows darken—
My life, and seem to shorten—
The happiness I cherish?
And yet it fades away.

Yet hope does not still linger,
Why point a warning finger?
That courage must be taken—
To win successfully.

As I sit and meditate,
For to me the hand of fate—
Has pursued relentlessly—
My every effort to undo.

But alas I can but wait,
For I spurn the hand of fate;
And my faith in all that's good—
Will some day be understood!

This unseen foe pursues undaunted,
My life, as now has e'er been haunted;
Oh how my heart, revolts and hates—
This arch-fiend enemy,—The Hand of Fate.

HAPPINESS

I stand and look toward the distant west,
Where the azure sky with its silvery crest;
And wonder if beyond the horizon blue,
If there's happiness there for me and you.

The bird's sweet song enchants no more,
For my heart is heavy, sad and sore;
And I envy them in their peaceful nests,
While I am denied real happiness.

The days go by with a nameless dread,
And I wander on with an endless tread;
Weary of mind and sadly distressed,
Hoping and longing for happiness.

The sunlight fades and shadows fall,
And the stars burst forth, one and all,—
As if determined to do their best,
To help me find that happiness.

At last my heart, tho' still repining,
Knows and feels the sun still shining;
My soul still longing for peace and rest, ,
Will some day find that happiness.

HOME AGAIN

There is a thought that brings a throb and a thrill,
Causes the head to rise, and the heart to feel -
A sort of longing, when we are about to send
Word when we will be coming home again.

After years of absence, and wandering too,
Through conditions of life, both old and new;
We start on our journey, with a steady trend,
And soon find ourselves at home again.

Only those who have met adversities in life,
And have been forced to struggle, in this world of strife.
No matter whether he be foe or friend,
Will find solace, in being home again.

Loving parents hoary, with the hand of old age,
With wise-given council as from an ancient sage;
How could we fail, our wayward steps to mend,
On receiving their blessing, when home again?

HOME

Not a house that is built by human hands,
With four square walls, that proudly stand;
But a place where happy moments are ever spent,
Where man rests from his labor, and is content.

A place where the stranger may ever see—
Happy children who play and laugh with glee;
Love reigns supreme, beneath that dome,
It is the one place man will e'er call Home.

HARVEST TIME

The days of sunshine, with their warm and vigorating breath,
Seem to have been lured away, to a sad and untimely death;
And as we look about us, we can most readily find —
Evidences that remind us of the approaching harvest time.

The ripened fields, with their wealth of bounteousness in store,
The orchards and the vineyards, with their plenteousness galore,
Have all been carefully gathered, as gold from a fabulous mine,
In this the season of the year, we call the busy harvest time.

The trees that once gave shelter, have surrendered their peaceful shade,
And the grass in all its greenness, has become a withered blade;
The cattle in the lowlands, and the fat and husky swine
Will surrender soon their existence, in this our harvest time.

The frost has nipped the pumpkins, and the corn is in the shed,
The potatoes and the turnips have been placed in their winter's bed;
And we now with grateful hearts, find time to feast and dine—
At the close of a busy season of fruitful harvest time.

Why should we not feel thankful, for the many blessings shown?
For the fertile fields and ripened crops, that have so steadily grown;
Until all nature seems, as it were, to flow with milk and wine
In this our bounteous golden season, of grateful Harvest time.

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

The near forgotten past rises before me like a dream,
Again I wander through happy hours, which to me will always seem—
The happiest of my life, at thought of which my eyes grow dim,
When I ponder on the saddest of all, it might have been.

Years cannot erase, nor heart and mind forget,—
The many dark and gloomy moments, since we first met;
And when with faint heart, life's battle to win,
There arises before me the thought, it might have been.

The days have come, the years like dreams have passed,
Still my thoughts cling to fond memories, that hold them fast;
Like a drowned man saved, when unable to swim,
I awake to find the saddest is, it might have been.

As I sit in solitude to dream and meditate,
A sense of quietude steals o'er me, and bids me hope and wait;
Now kneeling like a penitent, seeking forgiveness from sin,
I hear again that mournful voice, the saddest is it might have been.

LEST WE FORGET

When the vicissitudes of life, and changing time,
Sadden the heart, and bring gloom to the mind;
And yet the blessings, along our journey met,
Force us to stop and pause,—lest we forget.

Who has not been burdened or acquainted with grief,
Our weary feet would falter, and we would fall beneath—
The load that soon grows lighter, and we realize that yet
There is still something to remind us—lest we forget.

No matter where our weary feet may chance to wander,
An out-cast from home and friends cast asunder;
And yet every darkened cloud, with its silvery lining set,
Recalls to us the solemn fact—lest we forget.

Yet we tread onward, through this world of grief and strife,
With afflictions that come, to both children and wife;
Then why become disheartened, and worry and fret?
For they only arouse us to action—lest we forget.

By instinct we know that our journey is nigh run,
And with misgiving we behold the setting of life's sun;
The infirmities of old age cause the eyes to become wet,
For God has decreed it thus,—Lest We Forget.

LONELINESS

At some period in life, there comes to us all,
A feeling of depression, which seems to fall—
Like a weight upon our hearts, that words cannot express,
And leave us in a state of mind, we call Loneliness.

The little child with its prattle, of mirth and joy,
As it merrily romps, with its pet and toy,
And soon grows tired, and falls asleep to rest,
To escape that feeling of Loneliness.

The bird in the tree top, unmindful of its fate,
Seems fretful and songless, since estranged from its mate;
And at times we are startled, by a shrill cry of distress,
For even it is o'er shadowed by Loneliness.

The rich with resources at their will and command,
With prosperity and wealth on every hand;
Though apparently happy, they are forced to confess—
That money can't banish that Loneliness.

Solitude does not always bring peace to the mind,
And yet we wander in distant lands to find—
A solace—but alas, when we have done our best,
Finds us still a captive of Loneliness.

At last our allotted time grows near to its end,
And we feel forsaken, without even a friend—
To cheer us while our life's sun sets in the silent West,
With a hope of peace, where there is no Loneliness.

LOVE

The greatest attribute that is eternally divine,
The noblest gift to man, in all ages and time,
And it lights upon his soul, like a white winged dove,
Filling his heart with ecstasy, for that is love.

Love, thou hast been the ruling passion of all times,
The theme and the glory of song, and in rhymes;
The force that has sent men to war and strife,
And the soothing balm for the follies of life.

Love, thou dispeller of worldly doubts and fears,
Thou who hast stilled the heart and dried the tears
Of many a weary mortal, who in this life has felt
The pangs of anguish, caused by a longing regret.

Love, thou the opposite of hate and of scorn,
The first to greet us in the world when born;
The last to leave us, when we our departure take,
And still find you there, when from death's sleep awake.

Love, thou who not only dwells in stately mansions grand,
For the rich and poor, they too can readily understand
That feeling of emotion, in the heart so deep and true,
That gives our life a sweetness, that is entirely new.

Love, thou art to man what the dew is to the flower,
Giving new life and vigor, brightening every hour;
Dreaming of the future, and the many things in store,
That will bring us happiness, now and ever more.

Love, thou who brightens that day, and the shadows turn and flee,
And in earnest supplication, we finally turn to thee,
Thou giver of all that is truest, noblest, and best,
At last permits us to find that long sought for rest.

LIFE

We know not now from whence it came,
We only know it will return again—
Free from worry, grief and strife,
God's sacred legacy to man is LIFE.

It is ours to use in serving man,
Not to be ruined by uncleaned hands;
But to bring peace out of endless strife,
Then we'll have made a success of LIFE.

MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT

As the sun rises o'er yonder hills in the East,
Giving new life and vigor to man and beast;
And we hear in the distance, the shepherd's horn,
Telling us awake, and behold the new Morn.

The farmer sings as he sows his seed,
For a ripened harvest means a noble deed;
As he watches the sun, still humming his tune,
He starts himself homeward, because it is Noon.

The sun has set in the silent West,
He is tired and forlorn, and longs for rest;
Though weary of heart, but strong for the right,
He falls asleep under the dark shades of Night.

MY PURPOSE

I do not know why I am here,
To dwell with mortals, who ever fear
The storms of life that come and go,
And turn their gladness into woe.

I only know that here I see—
Work and service for you and me;
To spread the joy of life around,
Wherever misery or want is found.

I want my life unselfish be,
Frank and just and truthfully;
Honest and kind, firm and strong,
Upholding the right, condemning the wrong.

I want to walk with a steady tread—
The path of duty with upright head,
With mind alert and conscience clear,
Happy and content with naught to fear.

I want to take a moral stand,
Though friends come not at my command,
I want to feel that my cause is right,
And enter boldly in the fight.

I want to forget the dreary past,
And the failures that come thick and fast,
I want to face the rising sun,
And finish my work when the day is done.

I want to love and not to hate,
I want to give and not to take;
I want to cheer man on life's way,
And turn his darkness into day.

I want to leave this legacy dear,
As I close my eyes, with no sigh or tear;
That I was only a friend to man,
A purpose, from the heart and hand.

MAN

God's noblest work, of all ages and time,
Foretold to us, in song and in rhyme;
As the tiller of soil, and the producer of bread,
A task that is his, so all may be fed.

Man with his selfish and arrogant will,
Controlling the farm, the mine and the mill;
Denying the image of God in his life,
As he bargains with sin, in this world of strife.

MOTHER

There's a name that gives a throb and thrill,
A tender influence, controlling the mind and will;
There's no need to search, for there can be no other—
Whose sympathy is like that of dear old Mother.

Her hair may be gray, from want and cares,
On her angelic face, a sweet smile she wears;
Living or dead, we feel her presence near,
Comforting and loving, "Oh Mother my dear.

NOT TOMORROW, BUT TODAY

Since procrastination is the thief of time,
We should constantly bear, this thought in mind;
That the noblest deeds are done while we may—
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

A pleasant work spoken, and a cheerful smile,
Gives much comfort and joy, so give it a trial;
By doing it now you will hear some one say
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

Youth and vigor, always go hand in hand,
Seeking inspiration, for a firm and constant stand;
Trying to find the right, and ever consistent way
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

The sun with its warm and vigorating breath,
The flowers that have survived, the winter's chilly death,
We love them now, lest from us they might stray,
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

Opportunities, like passing moments speed,
Seeking now to reap, where we have sown no seed;
And yet we expect our reward and pay
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

If reward and happiness is to be our aim,
And we wish ever to strive, prosper and to gain,
Then, "Oh Lord, grant 'us thy blessings," we earnestly pray
Not Tomorrow, but Today.

NOBLE DEEDS

Dedicated to the Memory of Madame C. J. Walker

There was a lady who was known, in every town,
Whose worth was seldom if ever found,
Whose fame had grown like fruitful seeds,
And whose name was blessed for her noble deeds.

Many a youth has gone forward with ambitious mind,
With faltering steps, his place in the world to find;
And found inspiration in this noble woman's life,
And won success in this world of strife.

The struggling exponent of art has felt—
His energies and hopes, like drifted snow would melt;
But substantial aid from this noble woman given,
Came like showers of blessings from a far off heaven.

Across to darkest Africa and its lands explore,
She opened up their benighted minds with learning they adore,
And bade them take their places, in the intellectual world,
And wave aloft a banner, to her noble deeds unfurled.

In the social uplift as along religious lines,
Freely giving of her influence, in purifying the mind;
And raising up a standard, of morality and right,
Bringing to many homes the sunshine where all was night.

The men of the Y. M. C. A. will ever extol and honor her name,
And her noble deeds will find a place, in the halls of fame;
And the young women in the years to come, will be able to tell,
How she helped them to success, and served their causes well.

Since she has finally passed to her reward well won,
And left unfinished here on earth, the many tasks begun,
Now we can gather the flowers instead of the weeds,
Which this noble woman planted, by her noble deeds.

THE OLD MILL STREAM

It is not very far from the city's sultry streets,
Just down a short dusty road, where you can always meet
The cool balmy breezes, as fresh and pure as cream,
Being wafted gently onward, from The Old Mill Stream.

Well do I remember the deep, clear swimming pool,
Where the boys would duck each other, with no regards for the Golden
Rule;
All nature seems to smile on us, and the sun down on us beam,
For those were happy days, down on The Old Mill Stream.

My! What fine fish we caught there, when the water was calm and still,
The tadpoles and the minnows seemed to hide just beyond the mill;
But no matter where we went, and it may have been real mean—
To have deprived them of their freedom, in The Old Mill Stream.

The lowing herd seek the shelter of the overhanging trees,
The chirping of the birds resounds with the humming of the bees;
And the Weeping-Willow stands, as a broken-hearted queen,
Before her mighty conqueror, The Old Mill Stream.

The winter's chilly blasts have transformed the hills and plains,
The riverlets that merely ran, have become an icy main,
But with skates and sled to me it was and will always seem
The ideal spot for sport, down on The Old Mill Stream.

The wild flowers in their freshness, form a pretty little dell
As if their only purpose served for fond hearts to live and dwell;
And in their languid blissfulness it seems impossible to wean
Ourselves away from the fascination of the The Old Mill Stream.

Time with its many changes has enshrouded us in old age,
And we are winding up our part upon life's uncertain stage;
While the memories of the past come before us like a dream,
And we live again those happy hours, by The Old Mill Stream.

OUR PASTOR

Dedicated to Rev. P. A. Nichols

A man, small of stature with experience broad and wide,
Came to our relief in time to stem the ebbing tide—
Of folks who went the other way, for they could plainly see—
The spiritual death of this old church, reflected in you and me.

Our church has prospered, and O, how it has grown;
And his influence for good is far and widely known;
His fame and favor has grown, like fruitful seeds,
And his name is honored for his Christian deeds.

His solid truths, in capsule form, have healed many a wound,
His logic and his eloquence is seldom if ever found;
With his quaint little chuckle, his ready humor and wit,
Such is our beloved pastor, the Rev. Mr. Nick.

OUR PASTOR'S WIFE

Dedicated to Mrs. Rev. P. A. Nichols

She is not an ardent suffragette with ideas strange and wild,
But an unassuming lady, with temperament sweet and mild;
Filling a place in her home and church, among the rank and file,
With friends who love her, for the sweetness of her smile.

Ever willing and ready, her efforts to impart—
To the work of Missions goes her time, hand and heart;
Giving inspiration, so the noble work will grow,
Such is Warren's first Lady, that's why we love her so.

THE OLD CHURCH BELL

No sound disturbs the stillness on this blessed Sabbath day,
As we journey to that sacred shrine, to sit and sing and pray,
Except that hallowed sweetness that we all know and love so well,
As we stop and listen to the ringing of the Old Church Bell.

The traveler as he trods along, weary, tired, and sore,
Burdened with the cares of life, that fate has held in store;
A plaintive sound floats onward, o'er the hill and dell,
And he pauses to listen to the ringing of that Old familiar Bell.

It may be the dawning of a blessed Easter morn,
Or in the cold and bleak December when Christ our Lord was born;
Yet there comes o'er us a feeling that causes the heart to mourn and swell,
As we are charmed by the ringing of that Old familiar Bell.

It may be that two hearts are united and love has triumphed at last,
To journey through life together, without finding it a task;
But no one would dare consider or even attempt to foretell—
What solemn warning it brings, in the ringing of that Bell.

It may be that a wearied soul has taken its solemn flight
Into that great beyond, midst the realms of peace and light;
And our hearts grow sad and heavy, at that distant doleful knell,
And we bow our heads in reverence, at the ringing of that Bell.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD

Whether along the busy thoroughfare, or up the shady lane,
No matter where the location, the fact remains the same;
For it is the dearest spot on earth, our feet may ever tread,
The place of our childhood, we call The Old Homestead.

No lofty spires or gilded dome, bedecked her brow,
But in my silent fancy, I can see her now—
Hidden behind the clustering vines, as if in a web,
The dearest place on earth to me, is The Old Homestead.

The Morning Glories cling to the mouldering wall,
And the sunbeams kiss the dew drops, as they fall—
Around a gray-haired mother, who sits with needle and thread,
Enjoying the blessings of old age, at The Old Homestead.

No matter where we may roam, on land or on sea,
Our thoughts will wander back to the place where we
Have found sweet repose, in that white downy bed,
In that quiet little room, at The Old Homestead.

Time and decay have brought many changes to the place,
In all the surroundings there remains hardly a trace—
Of the many things we love, for they are all dead,
And only desolation remains, at The Old Homestead.

PHASES OF LIFE

Amidst that whirl and bustle of changeless time,
A little wanderer makes his advent, and we find—
Him unmindful of ills, besetments and strife,
For God has breathed into his soul, the breath of life.

Nature substantiated by months and many a year,
Has developed his manhood where he knows no fear;
Roaming the woods, with his trusty gun and knife,
He finds his greatest exultation in nature's life.

With his thought of home and fireside in his mind,
He gives little heed to the things of these varying times,
For to him the greatest blessing is his family and wife,
And he wishes for nothing better than the joy of domestic life.

The call to arms quickens and rouses his nerve,
And he answers boldly and willingly, his country to serve;
He marches gallantly away, to the beat of the drum and fife,
For he is proud of the fact he leads a soldier's life.

THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Where is the Chivalry of the by-gone day,
When knighthood was in flower, and honor held sway?
They are spoken of now historically, and but alas,—
Are few of the cherished memories of a declining Past.

Few care to open the closed book and read therein—
Of the deeds committed, with unintentional sin;
But would rather pursue life's course, wearing a mask,
Which does not enable the mind to forget the Past.

Present opportunities come once in life,
As we only pass this way once, in this world of strife;
Let us now do all we can for humanity's sake,
And see how many happier lives we now can make.

Why do we give thought of the things of tomorrow?
Wondering whether they hold for us happiness or sorrow;
And we hesitate with misgiving to understand to tour,
The undiscovered path that leads to the Future.

If we could draw back the curtain and see the days to come,
Would we not hasten to do the things that we left undone?
And prepare ourselves substantially, so that we may be sure
To find peace and happiness, in the Future.

REGRET

In every one's life there comes a day,
When the clouds and shadows seem to stay;
And while we sit, and worry and fret,
They only remind us of past regret.

The beggar who wanders, in search of bread,
Forlorn and forsaken, he'd rather be dead;
Hungry and cold, ever deeply in debt,
His past is one longing, bitter regret.

The king in his palace, of marble and gold,
The toiler in his cabin, cheerful but old;
The young and the old, have at sometime felt—
The pangs of anguish, caused by regret.

The lover devoted, tender and true,
With passions aroused, and love stirred anew;
Though apparently happy, contented but yet—
In life he finds things that bring keen regret.

The infant attended with loving care—
By a faithful mother, with face so fair,
Is the only one who has not yet met—
Something in life to cause regret.

Then why should we worry, with our ups and downs?
Does not a laugh bring more joy than sighs and frowns?
For sometime in every life, the eye becomes wet
With tears that are caused by the keenest regret.

SPRING

When the gentle zephyrs wafted from the far Southland,
Chasing away the chilly winds to a Northern strand;
And all nature seems to awake and merrily sing
Its praises once more to an ever welcome Spring.

A calmness reigns, and the billowy elements cease,
Giving new life and vigor to both man and beast;
The trees lift their heads, and the birds on the wing
Seem to rejoice in the thought of a returning Spring.

The dark days of the cold and dreary months have passed,
And the sun's soft rays break forth in splendor at last;
Then why should we wonder that every living thing,
Finds joy and ecstasy in the forth-coming Spring?

The leaves burst forth to bedeck the woodland dale,
And the soothing showers revive the grass, on hill and vale;
The flowers that have survived the chilly wind's sting,
All proclaim with joy the approaching Spring.

Man, the tiller of soil and the producer of bread,
To him intrusted the task so that all may be fed;
May well understand what these acclamations mean,
When all nature pays homage to the advent of Spring.

THE SURGING THROG

We stand and gaze at the onward steady tread
Of the many thousands who go forth, seeking their daily bread;
And hear the policeman's stern command "move on",
As we are swept aside by The Surging Throng.

From the early morn 'til the late hours of the silent night,
The same restless crowd passes before our weary sight,
And perchance a face that is lit up by a smile or song,
As they too are swept onward by The Surging Throng.

The old and the young, each on his mission bent,
Regretting the lost opportunities that have been idly spent;
Striving to do the right thing, and fearful of doing wrong,
While they are being swept along by The Surging Throng.

An old man totters along, wrecked in body and mind,
A youth in swinging gate, in all its vigor and prime;
Each shall have played his part in life's drama ere long,
Without any thought of the onward Surging Throng.

The beggar in his tattered rags with outstretched hands he stands,
Imploping those who pass along, to lend a helping hand;
For his life that once was balmy but now sadness to him belong,
As he watches the countless mass, who make up The Surging Throng.

So the multitude moves on its endless course to pursue,
Day after day, with no special end in view;
Only the hope that we, our weary lives may prolong,
Rather than surrender our place in The Surging Throng.

THE SILENT NIGHT

The day is past and over, the shadows gently fall,
The stars peep forth in watchfulness to remind us all—
That it is time for darkness, to banish the light,
And enshroud us in the gloom of another night.

The toil and grind of a busy day has spent its force,
And many a weary traveler stops to rest in sad remorse;
After struggling through weary hours we feel that we might
Find some surcease from sorrow in the silent night.

Darkness has spread its mantle over land and sea,
And a sense of repose gently steals o'er you and me,
And we willingly surrender to nature's supreme right—
To rest from our labors, through the silent night.

No sound disturbs the stillness except the gentle breeze—
Which seems to whisper soft and low through the leafy trees;
The moon rises slowly to protect those from fright—
Who are forced to stray and wander, through the silent night.

The old toiler lies down to his last sleep in life,
Surrounded by kind friends and soothed by a loving wife;
But e'er the dawn of morning, his soul has taken flight—
To its eternal resting place, during the silent night.

"A SOLDIER AND A MAN"

Respectfully dedicated to the memory of
Col. Chas. Young, U. S. A.

There was a man of great and growing renown,
Whose worth and valor is seldom if ever found;
Whose fame had grown like fruitful seeds,
And whose name was honored for his noble deeds.

At San Juan hill with the fighting Tenth,
This brave soldier knew what those orders meant;
When sent to rescue the Rough Riders that day,
And then saved the flag in his own gallant way.

Even Villa knew of his daring and pluck,
And his sharp-shooters only compelled him to duck;
For those rebels were soon destined to know
That rebellion must cease in Mexico.

The Filipinos knew of his worth and skill,
And found in him one fully fit to fill
A much needed place, they plainly could see,
Should be filled by a man, such as he would be.

The call was sounded and responses made,
By those who were willing and not afraid—
To die like soldiers, if the need might be,
To make this old world eternally free.

There was no reason to argue the reason why,
There was no time to murmur, weep or sigh;
This country needed men, brave and true,
So he offered himself his bit to do.

A soldier brave, and a West Pointer too,
Physically able, and ever willing to do;
But he was told at home, he must forever stick,
Because they pronounced him failing and sick.

To show them his strength, and endurance too,
From Xenia to Washington he rode straight through;
On a fiery steed, to the Capital door,
And refuted those charges they held in store.

They came from the farm, the school and the mill,
And found a place for all in the ranks to fill;
But he who would have earned renown and fame,
Remained at home, with an honored name.

They knew that promotion was his to gain,
And a Negro general to mould and train;—
The Negro soldier they could not see,
Through their prejudiced eyes, that could ever be,

Through all the strife and human greed,
With war and conquest, man's only creed,
This honored soldier was denied the right,
To command his forces, in that awful strife.

So across to Africa, and its heathen lands explore,
He opened up their benighted minds with learning they adore;
And bade them take their place, in the military world,
And wave aloft a banner, to his noble deeds unfurled.

In the social uplift, as well as long military line,
He found time to impart his influence in purifying the mind,
And raising up a standard of morality and right,
Bringing to many lives the sunshine where all was night.

The men of Wilberforce will extol and ever honor his name,
And his noble record will find a place in the hall of fame;
And the students in the years to come, will be able to tell,
How he helped them to success, and served their causes well.

Three months ago in a distant foreign clime,
Actively engaged with heart, hand and mind;
The Lord knew his soul needed peace and rest,
And took from among us, the noblest and best.

He has finally passed to his reward well won,
And finished here on earth the many tasks begun;
And the forces he marshalled in this broad expansive land,
Heard him answer his final summons, like a Soldier and a Man,

TWILIGHT

The sun has set behind the western hills,
The men homeward bound have left the mills;
Though weary and tired, their faces still bright,
They find rest and solace in the fading twilight.

The children play and laugh with glee,
 As they dance and sing, 'neath the old oak tree;
 And even we feel, that we have the right—
 To mingle our voices, in the glowing twilight.

Two lovers stroll through a shady nook,
 They stop and caress by the babbling brook;
 They plighted their love, as he held her tight,
 Two hearts beating as one, in the quiet twilight.

The birds have all found their nests in the trees,
 The gold tint of the setting sun we but scarcely see,
 The stars come out and seem to becken the night—
 To take the place, of the enchanting twilight.

The pale moon sends its light o'er hill and dale,
 And the wind through the trees sends forth a wail;
 Ah! where can we behold a more beautiful sight
 Than the last fading rays of a summer night?

"TALK TOLEDO"

A few years ago very little was known
 Of a city situated near the Michigan zone;
 And travelers passing this way only saw
 A dingy old station—a few houses, that's all.

Since then it has prospered, and how it has grown—
 An industrial center that is widely known:
 A place where the laborer, capitalist and all
 Get the most out of life, as they rise and fall.

A city with beautiful expansive streets:
 No hills to climb to their dizzy peaks—
 To look the city o'er, for you can plainly see
 The wonders that are many where'er you may be.

Enchanting woodland parks with their seclusive charm,
 Are here to greet and welcome you early night and morn;
 And there you find the weary folks, who eagerly stray,
 And find it quite impossible to tear themselves away.

Architectural buildings with their lofty gilded domes.
 Simple little cottages that were only meant for homes;
 Stately mansions with their treasures rich and rare,
 Captivate the stranger, as he stops, to look and stare.

Sherwood, Cottrell and Whitlock, men of renown.
 Are the favored sons of this our own home town:
 And well do we proudly boast of the same
 For their contribution to its honor and fame.

"Talk Toledo" for its prospects and intent—
 To open a gateway to the distant Orient;
 A deep sea waterway, that will surely be
 A boom of prosperity for you and for me.

"Talk Toledo" for its churches that are filled
With men from the factory, the school, and the mill,
A fact that is known and we proudly can say—
Where the men predominate on each Sabbath day.

The Negro population with its sense of civic pride,
A potent factor which is known far and wide—
Have a personal interest in the things that are to be,
To make the old town better, as far as they can see.

The good and the bad we have with us here,
And crime and debauchery are sure to appear:
But the stranger has heard of more bad than good;
So, let's talk good of Toledo as every man should.

It's our home town, let's boost it afar,
And the fellow who knocks, him should we bar;
For a town is as good as the people who see
The good in each other as well as the bad that be.

THE WOODLAND TREES

They stand majestically silent, deep rooted and firm,
Defying the elements that have made them sombre and stern,
They bow their heads as if saluting the gentle breeze,
These silent sentinels of the forest—The Woodland Trees.

We stand in awe and gaze at their lofty dizzy height,
And wonder what unseen force has given them the exclusive right
To become a haven of rest for the birds and the bees,
Those mighty creatures of the forest, The Woodland Trees.

Like tender plants that were nourished by the sun and rain,
And ofttimes swayed by the stormy winds as if in great pain,
Again lifting their heads that the beasts under their eaves
May find shelter and protection, 'neath the Woodland Trees.

Here and there we see where the lightning's fiery dart
Has torn loose a limb and peeled away the bark;
And yet they stand all shattered, as if to weave—
Fond memories that cluster, 'round The Woodland Trees.

The lowing herd seek their cooling shade from the sun's hot blast,
And find protection from the rain until the storm has passed;
And when the winter's ice and snow seem to chill and freeze,
They hover close to their protectors—The Woodland Trees.

Like old veterans that have surrendered after many battles fought,
And recalling to mind the lessons of fortitude to them taught,
They bow their heads in submission now covered by golden leaves,
Those gallant warriors of the forest—The Woodland Trees.

Ah, could we but tell of the battle fought and the conquests won,
Of the many hearts made happy by love's old sweet song;
And of the untold secrets kept and protected by these—
Loyal monarchs of the forests—The Woodland Trees.

Time and decay has bent them low with the hand of old age,
 Yet swaying to hold their own like an ancient sage;
 Their deadened limbs and leafless boughs cause us to grow sad and grieve—
 For those hoary headed giants—The Woodland Trees.

WHY?

Why does life to some seem bright and gay?
 To others one long dark night without a day;
 Only to sit and ponder, worry and sigh,
 And yet unable to answer the ?-Why.

Why do some have success, happiness and wealth?
 Surrounded with comforts of life and blessings of health,
 And others fail, no matter how hard they try,
 And yet unable to answer the ?-Why.

Why does the mother's love for her boy bring sorrow?
 When he should give her comfort and joy for the morrow;
 But his follies of youth cause her to mourn and cry,
 And yet she is unable to answer the ?-Why.

Why does the minister exhort, pray and preach—
 With the gospel, to men's hardened hearts to reach?
 And find that his labors bring few tears to the eye,
 And yet he is unable to answer the ?-Why.

Why do so many changes come into our life?
 As we seek to win in this world of strife,
 After all we must end the fight for man must die,
 And yet still the ?-remains, unanswered-Why.

WHEN?

When will our worries and trials be o'er,
 The sunlight of hope beaming through the door;
 To banish our sorrows and brighten our way,
 Turning our night into one perfect day?

When will friends be ever true and kind,
 Loyal and good with no faults to find;
 Ready to bind the broken heart and heal
 The wounds that hurt and the cuts we feel?

WHERE?

Where are the friends of yesterday?
 Whose kindly hands showed us the way;
 With courage and strength to do our best—
 To win honor, fame and happiness.

Where are those moments so idly spent?
 With no desire and no real intent—
 To call them back if such could be,
 And erase those sad, cruel memories.

WAR AND STRIFE

What means this unnatural form of unrest,
When men everywhere are put to the test,
And inspired to duty by the drum and fife,
To shoulder arms in this War and Strife?

The call has been sounded and responses made,
By those who are willing and yet not afraid,
To die like soldiers if the needs might be,
To make this old world eternally free.

They come from the farm, the school, and the mill,
And find a place in the ranks to fill:
With youth and vigor and courage to thrill—
A determined mind with undaunted will.

There's no reason to argue the reason why,
There's no time to murmur, weep and sigh,
This country needs men brave and true,
And calls on you your bit to do.

Yesterday tearful farewells were said,
Tomorrow we journey where others will tread,—
Through fertile fields, once ripe with grain,
Now a deserted and barren plain.

Why all this strife and human greed?
Is war and conquest man's only creed?
Human slaughter, destruction and ruin,
His only goal and at last the tomb?

The rich and the poor, the high and the low,
For the sake of loyalty, they too must go,
And to give their all for the cause is one—
That calls for every patriotic son.

The sorrow and grief and heartaches sore—
That are laid and borne at every door,
And for years will cut like a two-edged knife,
From the misery brought by this war and strife.

YOU

Life to me is not the same as of yesterday,
The world moves on, and the flowers bloom in the same old way;
But no matter where'er I go or whate'er I do,
I find myself constantly thinking of you.

Since our first meeting not very long ago,
The desire and longing of my heart has been to know—
If dreams are only fancies or do they ever come true?
For I find myself constantly dreaming of you.

If I could draw back the curtain and look upon the morrow,
And there behold a picture that would bring joy, not sorrow;
Then would my life be all sunshine, if I only knew—
That the picture was the face of none other than you.

Hope and despondency, pleasure and pain,
Come into our lives, midst the clouds and the rain;
And as I sit in solitude, meditating too,
I find myself constantly, longing for YOU.

YESTERDAY

In the lonely hours of meditation there comes a time
When lost opportunities trouble the mind;
When if we could the unceasing pendulum of time stay,
And again traverse the uncertain path of yesterday.

The miser who in his closet counts his ill-begotten gold,
His conscience hardened and his heart heavy and cold;
But in the mid-night hours, his unhappy mind will stray—
To the shameful acts he would recall of yesterday.

The drunkard with his love for strong drink and wine,
His physical strength gone and his shattered nerves and mind—
Give little evidence of his former self, which we are wont to say,
Were wrecked and ruined by the snags and snares of yesterday.

The convict, as he sits in his prison cell,
Where many an unfortunate is forced to pine and dwell;
Sad though his heart, his life must be spent in the same dreary way,
With little hope for atonement for the sins of yesterday.

The penitent sinner now realizes his lost unhappy state,
And seeks to turn from the path of sin before it is too late;
But on his death-bed he is heard to mourn and pray,
OH GOD! Forgive me for the deeds and wrongs of yesterday.

THE END





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